



Coastal Communications



NATIONAL COASTAL ASSESSMENT: ALASKA ORD/REGION 10/OW/ADEC



Background

The US EPA's National Coastal Assessment (NCA) is a five-year effort led by EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) and EPA's Office of Water (OW), to evaluate the assessment methods it has developed to advance the science of ecosystem condition monitoring. This program will survey the condition of the Nation's coastal resources (estuaries) by creating an integrated and comprehensive coastal monitoring program among the coastal states to assess coastal ecological condition. The NCA is accomplished through strategic partnerships with all 24 U.S. coastal states. Using a compatible probabilistic design and a common set of survey indicators, each state conducts their survey and assesses the condition of their coastal resources independently. Because of the compatible design, these estimates can be aggregated to assess conditions at the EPA Regional, biogeographical, and National levels.

National Coastal Assessment Strategy

The Environmental Protection Agency has developed a Cooperative Agreement with the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) to work collaboratively in the Western States' Coastal EMAP component of the NCA.

Since Alaska has more shoreline than all other coastal states combined, the state has been separated into five coastal regions. ADEC will conduct a pilot study on the south central Alaska estuarine region to assess the physical, biological, and chemical condition of coastal resources using a standardized suite of environmental indicators during the summer of 2002.

This project will involve partnerships with National Marine Fisheries Service (Seattle, WA), U.S. EPA (Corvallis and Newport, OR), Alaska Department of Fish & Game, University of Alaska-Fairbanks, Washington Department of Ecology, Cook Inlet Keeper, Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council and other interested parties to establish a monitoring baseline in Alaska. Field sampling is expected to start in early July and run through late August/early September depending upon weather.

The base sampling effort (figure) will be supplemented by placement of additional sites within Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet to allow the overall condition of these water bodies to be statistically assessed. Currently the sampling allocation is for 31 sites in Prince William Sound, 30 sites in Cook Inlet, and 14 sites along the remainder of southern central coast of the Alaska Peninsula.

Further Information

For further information, please contact Gerry Guay at the ADEC at (907) 269-3070 or gerry_guay@envirocon.state.ak.us; or Walt Nelson at the ORD National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory's Western Ecology Division at Newport, Oregon at (541)8674041 or nelson.walt@epa.gov. Visit the Coastal Communications web site at <http://www.epa.gov/ged/crc.htm>.

